Study
Report
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Revision of the Army Career Transition Survey: Final Study Report

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From 1990-1995, the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences administered an experimental exit survey to separating soldiers. This instrument was known as the Army Career Transitions Survey (ACTS). The ACTS was designed for use among separating Active Duty Army personnel to measure: satisfaction levels, perceptions of Army leadership, advice for potential recruits, and the reasons for leaving the Army. The Human Resources Research Organization was awarded a contract to develop standardized administration procedures and to review and revise the items on the ACTS. To meet the goals of this research, the approach primarily involved: gathering information through semistructured interviews with pertinent commands and transition site personnel; reviewing the literature on leadership; pilot testing the revised survey instrument; and analyzing the results. Each of these efforts is addressed individually in this report.

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Revision of the Army Career Transition Survey: Final Study Report

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FOREWORD

The revision of the Army Career Transitions Survey (ACTS) was initiated by the Human Resources Directorate within the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel (ODCSPER, HRD) and carried out by the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences via a contract to the Human Resources Research Organization. The objective was to develop a technically sound exit instrument yielding candid and reliable results to better inform personnel policy. The revised ACTS should take into account the requirements of various Army Commands. In addition, a redesigned ACTS could facilitate responses from exiting soldiers by allowing them to more accurately state their problems and concerns. In sum, the revised survey should generate higher quality data, which in turn, will improve the monitoring of trends and cycles involved with soldier turnover.

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REVISION OF THE ARMY CAREER TRANSITION SURVEY: FINAL STUDY REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Requirements:

From 1990-1995, the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences administered an experimental exit survey to separating soldiers. This instrument was known as the Army Career Transitions Survey (ACTS). The ACTS was designed for use among separating Active Duty Army personnel to measure: satisfaction levels, perceptions of Army leadership, advice for potential recruits, and the reasons for leaving the Army. The Human Resources Research Organization was awarded a contract to develop standardized administration procedures and to review and revise the items on the ACTS.

Procedure:

To meet the goals of this contract, the approach primarily involved: gathering information through semi-structured interviews with pertinent commands and transition site personnel; reviewing the literature on leadership; pilot testing the revised survey instrument; and analyzing the results. These steps are addressed individually in this report.

Findings:

ACTS items were refined in accordance with the recommendations of the Army Career and Alumni program, the Retirement Service Office, Army Housing, Community and Family Support Center, Army Recruiting Command, as well as the offices within the Department of Army Personnel (DAPE). From the pilot test, interpretable factors were discernible based upon the satisfaction and importance ratings. Further, the leadership competencies deemed necessary for inclusion in the ACTS leadership supplement were found reliable.

Utilization of Findings:

The ACTS has been revised to include updated and reliable Satisfaction and Leadership Supplement Items. Recommendations for administration include making the ACTS mandatory and disseminating it during the pre-separation briefing. This exit survey is now ready for operational implementation.

REVISION OF THE ARMY CAREER TRANSITION SURVEY
FINAL STUDY REPORT

CONTENTS

Page

Introduction 1

Revising the Administration Procedures 1
Interviews with Transition Site Personnel 2

Revising the Items in the ACTS 3
Interviews with Commands 3
Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) 4
Retirement Service Office 4
Army Housing 5
Community and Family Support Center 5
Directorate of Advertising and Public Affairs, USAREC 6
DAPE (MPO, MPE, MPA) 6

Revising the Leadership Supplement: Literature Review 9
Reviewing the Relevant Literature in Leadership 9
Addressing the Specific Needs of the Army 10
Revising the Leadership Supplement 11

Pilot Administration of the ACTS 11
Site Selection 11
Pilot Administration 12
Procedure 13

Data Analysis Results 13
Satisfaction Items 13
Leadership Supplement 20
Modifications to the Revised ACTS 35

Recommendations 35
Determine Target Goals 35
Provide Sponsors with Feedback 37
Take a Long-Term Look at the Revised ACTS 37

CONTENTS (Continued)

Page

Conclusions: Considerations and Cautions 38
The Impact of Identification of ACTS Responses Is Yet Unknown 39
The Impact of Type of Separation of ACTS Responses Is Yet Unknown 39
The Utility of the ACTS Has Not Yet Been Established 39
Establish a Computerized ACTS 40
The Comparative Efficacy of the Revised ACTS is Unknown 40

Conclusions 40

References 43

Appendix A. Command Interview Source Information A-1

B. The Army Career Transitions Survey B-1

C. Administration Instructions C-1

D. Receipt Log D-1

E. Topical Report E-1

List of Tables

Table 1. Sites Selected and Criteria 12
2. Factor Loadings for Satisfaction Ratings 14
3. Factor Loadings for Importance Ratings 18
4. Reliability Coefficients for Satisfaction Factors 20
5. Leadership Supplement Items Factor Loadings 21
6A. Competency Matrix Factor Loadings 24
6B. Competency Matrix Factor Loadings 28
7. Leadership Supplement Reliability Coefficients 33
8. Leadership Supplement Intercorrelations 34
9. Leadership Supplement (Item 18) Suggested Revisions 36

REVISION OF THE ARMY CAREER TRANSITIONS SURVEY : FINAL STUDY REPORT

Introduction

From 1990-1995, the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) administered an experimental exit survey to separating soldiers. This instrument was known as the Army Career Transitions Survey (ACTS). The ACTS was designed for use among separating Active Duty Army personnel to measure: satisfaction levels, perceptions of Army leadership, advice for potential recruits, and the reasons for leaving the Army.

The initial version of the ACTS consisted of 104 items, each with multiple response options. These can be broadly grouped into four areas: 1) background information and demographics; 2) satisfaction with various aspects of the Army environment; 3) satisfaction with Army leadership (Army Leadership Supplement), and 4) questions related to occupational training and duties. The instrument typically required 15 to 25 minutes to complete.

In a recent evaluation of the ACTS, Giacalone (1993) raised a number of methodological and administrative issues, including the lack of demonstratable utility and inconsistent survey administration and data tracking procedures. There were also problems with the data. For instance, survey response rates were typically low and representation has been skewed. In addition, response patterns were different for unidentified and identified respondents (i.e., by social security number), as well as for involuntary and voluntary separatees. Thus, Giacalone proposed four primary recommendations: 1) determine whether the collected data will address the needs of a range of potential users; 2) update and revise the satisfaction measures; 3) standardize the administration procedures, and 4) measure the impact of respondent identification on the resulting data.

The Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) was awarded a contract to develop standardized administration procedures and to review and revise the items on the ACTS. To meet the goals of this research, the approach primarily involved: gathering information through semi-structured interviews with pertinent commands and transition site personnel; reviewing the literature on leadership; and pilot testing the revised survey instrument. These steps are addressed individually in the following sections.

Revising the Administration Procedures

Giacalone (1993) postulated that the ACTS administration procedures (e.g., how the survey was administered, to whom the survey was administered) were implemented differently across transition sites. Such inconsistency raised the question of possible bias in the data; and thus, plans were also made to develop standard administration and monitoring procedures.

Interviews with Transition Site Personnel

Interviews were scheduled with transition center personnel to determine how exactly the ACTS was implemented at each location, what problems were occurring, and what improvements should be considered. The interviews were conducted by telephone with representatives from 42 transition points.

The data were content analyzed for patterns across sites. The results of the analysis suggested five common problem areas. After careful consideration, we generated a list of possible solutions to these problems. The problems and possible solutions follow:

Problem 1 *Many sites seem unaware of their own low return rates and administration problems.*

Problem 2: *Because the ACTS is voluntary, it is more likely to be disregarded by soldiers and by those responsible for its administration.*

Problem 3: *Administrative support systems to help direct and monitor ACTS transition site activities are lacking.*

Problem 4: *An enormous disparity existed between the number of personnel separating across the various transition points.*

Problem 5: *Transition sites appear to have slightly more difficulty obtaining completed ACTS from Officers than from Enlisted personnel.*

Although each of the recommendations herein were important, the following were considered of primary importance:

- *Make the ACTS mandatory.*
- *Require attendance at the pre-separation briefings and inform Officers of the importance of the ACTS.*
- *Provide clearer directions to transition sites regarding how and when the ACTS should be administered.*
- *Encourage cooperation and compliance by conducting group administration of the ACTS, prior to day of separation, such as the pre-separation and pre-retirement briefings at approximately 3 to 6 months before separation, such as at the pre-separation and pre-retirement briefings at about 3 to 6 months before separation.*
- *Provide the name and telephone number of an ACTS contact person with every shipment of the ACTS. Supplies of the ACTS should be sent to the sites on a routine basis.*

- *Make certain that forms are returned to ARI and not sent to a different location.*

- *Require transition points to account for low response rates.*

- *Establish quarterly deadlines for the return of the completed ACTS.*

- *Provide transition point personnel with quarterly feedback regarding their response rates and related problems.*

The following recommendations were considered of secondary importance:

- *Provide more administration information for transitioning personnel.*

- *Provide support for overburdened transition points to handle large groups of separating personnel, taking monthly fluctuations into account.*

For a more detailed discussion of the administration procedures, see Giacalone and Naughton (1995).

Revising the Items in the ACTS

Giacalone (1993) noted several deficiencies in the ACTS survey items: 1) there was no evidence to suggest that important Army issues had been addressed by the survey; 2) some items were unclear and subject to multiple interpretations; and 3) the satisfaction items were not based on any known Army data needs, and this led underutilized results.

Interviews with Commands

In attempts to address these deficiencies, we conducted interviews with major Army commands. Specifically, the objective was to determine the needs of the sponsors, how well the ACTS had met these needs, and if it had not, how it could in the future.

Although no specific restrictions prohibit the inclusion of any particular type of question in an exit survey, the tradition is to avoid topics that are better addressed elsewhere. Thus, for example, we avoided topics which traditionally, and more appropriately, fall into the domain of evaluation research. Similarly, although a particular survey length is not mandated, exit surveys customarily have been relatively brief yet tend to address a wide spectrum of issues. As such, the revised ACTS should 'pulse' a variety of topics within the confines of a brief instrument.

In accordance with directives from ARI and from developed leads, the following groups were interviewed and/or surveyed:

- Army Career and Alumni Program
- Retirement Service Office
- Army Housing Office
- Community and Family Support Center
- U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC)
- Department of the Army, Personnel (DAPE)
- Leadership Directorate (see Leadership Supplement section)

The interview results are described in the following sections by group. Appendix A contains the names of individuals who were contacted and their affiliation.

Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP)

ACAP informed us that the original eight satisfaction factors on the ACTS (i.e., Leadership/Supervisory, Job satisfaction, Organizational Incentives/Rewards, Housing, Office Policies and Staffing, Medical Benefits, Moving Factors, and Support Services) were not useful to them. Rather, their interests were as follows:

1) the efficacy of ACAP counseling (i.e., Did ACAP help to get soldier a job? How effective were specific and general aspects of the counseling process?);

2) the employment prospects and status of the soldier as separation approached; and

3) the differences in experiences across transition points.

Changes Made to the ACTS. We determined that the evaluation of ACAP counseling was unsuitable for an exit survey, thus items were not added for this particular topic. However, more general questions regarding the quality of ACAP assistance, as well as the quality of the pre-separation briefing and the explanation of Army benefits, were included in the satisfaction measures (Question 7). ACAP questions regarding employment status and unemployment compensation (which ACAP suggested and constructed) were also added (Questions 3-6).

Retirement Service Office

As with ACAP, the Retirement Service Office informed us that the eight satisfaction factors were not useful to them. However, they identified one major issue that they wanted us to consider. Specifically, they wanted to know whether exiting soldiers had been properly informed about their choices upon retirement, especially about the survivor benefit plan.

Changes Made to the ACTS. The needs of the Retirement Service Office were incompatible with the intent of exit surveys, rather an evaluation research approach may be warranted to meet their needs. As a result, items regarding this issue were not added to the survey.

Army Housing

The meeting with Army Housing generated a number of specific questions of interest to them:

1) Are soldiers leaving because of housing?;

2) What is the level of satisfaction with overseas living conditions?;

3) What is the quality and availability of government housing?;

4) What is the future of government housing? To whom should it be made available? How much should be available?;

5) What is the relationship of housing to readiness and retention?;

6) How much are housing costs?;

7) What is the importance of housing in relation to morale/retention; and

8) What is Army Housing's impact on the quality of life?

Changes Made to the ACTS. With the exception of a few policy-oriented issues (i.e., What is the future of government housing?, To whom should it be made available?, How much should there be available?), the Army Housing Office was interested in the soldier's perception of housing, which fits within the context of an exit survey. As such, the Army Housing Office streamlined their questions and generated a smaller set of draft items. These questions have been incorporated into the revised ACTS (see Questions 8-10).

Community and Family Support Center

Because of their time constraints, a personal interview with the Plans and Policy Directorate Division from the Community and Family Support Center was not possible. However, a phone interview with this group revealed specific information needs pertaining to satisfaction with particular programs and family life issues. These are listed in the subsequent section.

Changes Made to the ACTS. The items to be considered were compatible with the intent of exit surveys and with the format of the ACTS. The Directorate provided us with specific questions they wished to include in the satisfaction measures. These items

are now part of question 7 and include: 1) Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs; 2) Army Community Service Programs; 3) Child Care and Youth Services Programs; 4) Support and Concern Army leaders show for your family; 5) How well your family adjusted to being an Army family; 6) Amount of time for family and friends; 7) Amount of time for personal needs; and 8) Respect the Army shows spouses.

Directorate of Advertising and Public Affairs, USAREC

The interview with USAREC indicated that no changes were necessary. However, they added that future ARI reports concerning the ACTS would be most useful if they include longitudinal trends, as well as current information. Although no changes were made to the ACTS as a result of our interview, several recommendations were added to the *Recommendations* list in this report.

DAPE (MPO, MPE, MPA)

The interview with the Department of Army Personnel (DAPE) generated a number of requests for new items and for the deletion of old items. Because DAPE representatives were relatively specific about their needs, it was possible for them to clearly identify those items that should be retained, as well as items which should be added or deleted. Their requests are summarized in the following section.

Changes Made to the ACTS. The issues which DAPE representatives highlighted were congruent with the intent of the ACTS, as well as with the format of the satisfaction items. As a result of the interview, the following items were retained:

Leadership/Supervisory Items

Technical/tactical competence of leadership
Superiors' respect for me as a person
Superiors' recognition of my accomplishments
Level of fairness in my performance evaluation
Level of competence of supervisors

Personal Job Satisfaction Items

Overall job fulfillment and challenge
Overall enjoyment doing my job
Assignment to jobs offering technical/professional development
Use of my skills and training on jobs
Assignment to leadership jobs
Amount of control over my job assignments

Incentives and Rewards

Amount of basic pay
Amount of special pay (such as bonuses)
Promotion/advancement opportunities

Living Arrangements

Dependent facilities/schools

Medical Benefits

Quality of family medical and dental care
Quality of military medical and dental care
Availability of dependent medical and dental care

Moving Issues

Geographic location of jobs
Living conditions overseas
Amount of overseas duty
Number of PCS relocations

DAPE representatives asked that the following issues be added to the satisfaction items:

Quality and amount of training for MOS
Overall preparation provided to get a civilian job
Amount of educational benefits

DAPE representatives also requested that the following items be deleted from the original satisfaction items:

Item Number	Item
4	Amount of regulations and discipline
8	Length of working hours
10	Amount of paperwork
11	Amount of personnel available to do work
23	Quality of family service centers
32	Quality of commissary exchanges
33	Support and recreational services

Additional Changes

Three other significant changes were made to the satisfaction items. First, items that failed to load on any factor during a previous factor analysis (see Giacalone, Elig, Ginexi, & Bright, 1995), that were not of interest to any command, were deleted. These included:

Item Number	Item
6	Number of quick response tasks
13	Level of competence of co-workers
14	Quality and amount of equipment
16	Living conditions stateside
19	Spouse's career/work opportunities
26	Retirement benefits
27	Level of educational benefits
28	Fairness of married versus single pay
30	Compensation for PCS moves
31	Amount of job security
34	Overall quality of Army life
37	Amount of family separation
40	Access to education/training

Second, an importance rating was added to the satisfaction rating scale. This new rating indicates how critical different items (and different aspects of the Army) are viewed by the soldiers. Thus, it more closely approximates an actual exit interview where the interviewer can make these assessments usually by reading non-verbal communications or asking follow-up questions. In sum, the inclusion of importance ratings is expected to increase data quality. Note that the importance and satisfaction scales now have 5- and 4-points, respectively.[1]

Additionally, an item in the original ACTS, which asked the respondent to indicate the most important reason why s/he left the Army (item C), was not included in the revised survey. This item was eliminated for several reasons. One reason was methodological in nature; the question forced the respondent to choose from reasons listed only in the survey. In actuality, the individual may have based his/her decision on a reason that was not listed; therefore, the respondent would be prevented from answering accurately. In addition, the item was burdensome to the respondent (i.e., it required the respondent to reread an already lengthy list of items (7a-ak)). When the burden of answering a question is great, it can jeopardize the data. For example, it can result in

[1] An even-numbered scale was chosen for the satisfaction items as it forces the respondent to take a position (i.e., satisfied vs. dissatisfied). Further, a 4-point scale was used for the satisfaction items in the previous ACTS. A "forced choice" scale helps to prevent a neutral response, increases variability, and therefore positively affects data quality. For the importance items, neutral response sets were deemed to be less likely, and a 5-point scale was considered appropriate. However, the scales can be revised should the sponsor deem it necessary.

lowered response rates, unrepresentative responses (i.e., answers only from those willing to put forth a good deal of effort and energy), as well as haphazard responses. However, perhaps most importantly, this item was eliminated because more useful information can bey captured through the appropriate weighting of items in the revised survey (7a-ak).

Specifically, we recommend devising an index to weight item importance by satisfaction. This, in effect, would essentially provide information as to reasons why the individual has decided to leave the Army and not rely solely on one listed reason. For instance, if an aspect of Army life was considered very unimportant and very unsatisfying to the respondent, we can surmise that this factor probably had little impact on the soldier's decision to leave. Conversely, if an aspect of Army life was considered very important, but was also very unsatisfying, this factor most likely played a major role in the individual's decision to leave. However, the original item can be reintroduced to the revised survey (preceding item 8) if the sponsor deems it necessary. Responses to this item could then be compared to the weighted satisfaction/importance responses as a check on the validity and appropriateness of the "most important" item.

Finally, demographic questions were moved from the beginning to the end of the survey. Literature has shown that response patterns can be different (e.g., less candid, more positive or negative) when the individual's identity is known (see Giacalone, Elig, Ginexi, & Bright, 1995). Thus, if the request for identity is not as salient, it may help to ameliorate response bias.

Revising the Leadership Supplement: Literature Review

The Leadership Supplement of the ACTS, Section III, also required revision. Specifically, ARI analyses indicated that the Supplement failed to discriminate between soldiers who were satisfied with Army leadership, versus those who were not. Furthermore, it was impossible to determine the reasons (and scope) associated with the satisfaction ratings, and how the different aspects of leadership had been rated. As a result, both civilian and military literature were reviewed to identify the appropriate leadership measures for the revised Supplement. In addition, an interview was conducted with the Army Leadership Directorate to discuss their needs and expectations for the Leadership Supplement.[2]

Reviewing the Relevant Literature in Leadership

The Army Leadership Directorate and the relevant literature suggested that the revised Supplement should assess the specific technical and interpersonal leadership competencies related to Army life, as well as the general leadership behaviors and skills related to those competencies.

[2] Although the interviews and discussions with the Leadership Directorate led to the creation of a new Leadership Supplement, no changes were requested for leadership supervision related items within the context of the satisfaction items.

Unfortunately, much of the leadership literature was inadequate or inappropriate for identifying feasible Army leadership measures. For instance, the literature discussed measures which required expert assessments from policy makers, leadership theorists, or measurement specialists, and not subordinates. An additional complication was the lack of consensus about what defined "leadership" and the competencies it should include.

Ultimately, deciding what constitutes "leadership" and what to measure required a judgment call. Some of the literature described the optimal definition of leadership as one which is functional: driven by the requisite purpose at hand (see Campbell, 1977; Karmel, 1978; Uleman, 1991). We decided that the Army Leadership Directorate could provide the best definition of Army leadership.

Addressing the Specific Needs of the Army

The Army Leadership Directorate identified the following competencies as (1) germane to Army leadership and (2) those that could be evaluated by subordinates:

- communication
- planning
- teaching and counseling
- use of available systems
- professional ethics
- decision - making
- soldier team development
- technical/tactical proficiency
- supervision (similar to KSA).[3]

These nine competencies paralleled four key aspects of the Leadership Model proposed by Locke (1991): 1) motives and traits (MT); 2) knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA); 3) vision (V); and 4) implementation of the vision (IV).

The Leadership Directorate also stressed that soldier evaluations should be considered within the context of the soldier's experience (rank and branch), as well as within the leader's context (rank, length of time as the respondent's supervisor, frequency of contact with the respondent). As such, items addressing these variables were also included.

[3] In addition to the listed competencies, the Leadership Directorate identified others (i.e., clarifying ambiguity, negotiation, development, assessment, consensus building, and evaluation). These additional competencies were not incorporated into the revised Leadership Supplement because they were less important and also because they could not be properly evaluated by separating personnel.

Revising the Leadership Supplement

To create the revised items, we relied on multiple sources so as to avoid bias that could result from adopting the perspective of leadership from a single author or theorist. Once draft items were created, an iterative revision process was conducted with the Leadership Directorate, ARI, and HumRRO staff. As a result, deletions, additions, and enhancements were made to the items.

We also replaced the previous scale (i.e., poor to excellent) with a frequency scale (i.e., requesting the rate of a given leadership behavior), since the latter is behavioral in nature and better assesses performance, whereas the former requires a more subjective judgement. For a more detailed discussion of the literature review, see Giacalone and Naughton (1995), "Recommendations for Administration of the Army Career Transitions Survey."

Therefore, the final draft version of the revised Leadership Supplement contains items requesting ratings about leadership performance dimensions or competencies and six items addressing the supervisor's background and characteristics, including the respondent's level of interaction with the supervisor. The revised ACTS, in its entirety, is presented in Appendix B. Items 13-18 comprise the Leadership Supplement.

Pilot Administration of the ACTS

Next, we pretested the revised instrument to determine what improvements to make, if any, before large-scale implementation will begin.

Site Selection

Several criteria were used to select the pilot sites. These included: 1) the monthly average number of separations as suggested by data from the final quarter of 1994; 2) geographic location, and 3) the predominant MOS category associated with the installation. The goal was to select sites where the number of separations would enable us to gather the necessary data quickly and which were geographically and occupationally diverse.

Considering only the number of soldiers transitioning out per month, 18 potential locations were identified. After taking into account all of the selection factors, the following 12 locations were chosen as ACTS pretest sites (shown in Table 1).

Table 1: Sites Selected and Criteria

Installation	Region	Primary MOS	Avg. Officer Separations	Avg. Enlisted Separations
Benning	South	Infantry	51	404
Bliss	Southwest	Artillery	75	268
Bragg	South	ABN/SF	123	533
Campbell	Midwest	Airborne	88	421
Dix	East	Training	44	523
Drum	East	Mountain Div.	14	129
Gordon	South	Signal Corps	51	117
Hood	Southwest	Armor	174	991
Knox	Midwest	Armor	63	361
Leonard-Wood	Midwest	Engineer	49	175
Rucker	South	Aviation	28	144
Stewart	South	Infantry	65	331

Pilot Administration

After sites were selected, ARI provided Points of Contact (POC) names and phone numbers for all twelve sites.[4] Prior to the survey mailout, we contacted each POC by telephone to explain the purpose of the project, the POC's role in the pilot testing, the contents and arrival date of the pilot materials, and the name and telephone number of a HumRRO contact in the event of problems. This ten minute briefing was intended to provide POCs with project-related information and also to secure their cooperation.

A majority of the POCs agreed to cooperate. There were a few problems making initial contact, however. For instance, several POCs failed to return calls despite numerous telephone messages. In addition, communication difficulties (i.e., busy and disconnected telephone lines) hindered our efforts to contact several POCs. Ultimately, we contacted all twelve POCs and secured their involvement, although this required 7 business days (from February 15-23) to do so.

[4] This list was combined with updated information (e.g., new POC names and telephone numbers, etc.) obtained from phone logs of the initial interviews with transition point personnel.

Packages which contained pilot materials were then express mailed to all twelve sites. Each package contained: 1) a cover letter from General Sikora (Appendix C), 2) administration directions (also Appendix C), 3) a set of 50 pilot surveys (plus 2 extra per package), and 4) a postage-paid, Federal Express envelope with return label to HumRRO.

Procedure[5]

Transition site personnel were instructed to administer the revised ACTS to soldiers on-site. The soldiers were allowed to complete the ACTS in an unlimited amount of time, but were asked to record how much time they needed. The transition administrators also were told to distribute the ACTS to a variety of separatees who were representative of their site and to document any problems or comments.

In mid-March, we made follow-up calls to sites that had not returned their surveys. These sites included: Fts. Benning, Bliss, Hood, Knox, Leonard-Wood, and Rucker. On April 6, 7, and 10, we made a second set of follow-up calls to Fts. Benning, Bliss, and Knox, for the same reason. In addition, calls were made to Fts. Hood and Leonard-Wood to urge them to send us additional completed surveys in order to reduce their low response rates (58% for Ft. Hood and 4% for Ft. Leonard-Wood). One POC explained that low turnover was causing the delay.

As of May 4, we had received 315 surveys from all but three sites: Fts. Bliss, Knox, and Benning. After informing ARI about this problem, ARI contacted the remaining POCs who had surveys outstanding and instructed them to expedite returning them. Ultimately, the remaining surveys from Fts. Bliss and Benning were sent to HumRRO for processing. In all, 480 surveys were returned (although 472 were included in the data base because 8 surveys were later found to be blank.)[6] Appendix D contains information about the POCs, as well as number of surveys returned and return dates for each site.

Data Analysis Results

Satisfaction Items

The ratings of 37 satisfaction items were evaluated using a principle components factor analysis with a varimax rotation. Using the loading of .50 as a criterion value for inclusion in the interpretation of the factor, the factor analysis revealed 8 distinct factors that had eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Table 2 summarizes the factor loadings for the satisfaction ratings.

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[5] The administration procedures attempted to incorporate administration recommendations outlined in Giacalone and Naughton (1995). Those recommendations that were feasible for the pilot test were adopted.

[6] In all, 600 surveys were mailed. Therefore, the response rate was approximately 80%.

Table 2: Factor Loadings for Satisfaction Ratings

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6	FACTOR 7	FACTOR 8
a. Overall job fulfillment/challenge								.61
b. Superiors' respect for me as a person	.63							
c. Overall enjoyment doing my job								.59
d. Quality of leadership and management	.78							
e. Superiors' recognition of my accomplishments	.78							
f. Geographic location of jobs			.59					
g. Level of competence of supervisors	.69							
h. Living conditions overseas								
i. Amount of overseas duty							.84	
j. Number of PCS relocations							.78	
k. Quality of family medical and dental care						.81		
l. Dependent facilities/schools								.54
m. Amount of basic pay					.79			
n. Amount of special pay (such as bonuses)					.78			
o. Quality of military medical and dental care					.54	.51		
p. Promotion/advancement opportunities								
q. Assignment to jobs offering technical/professional development			.57					

Table 2: Factor Loadings for Satisfaction Ratings (Cont.)

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6	FACTOR 7	FACTOR 8
r. Use of my skills and training on jobs			.71					
s. Amount of time for personal needs								
t. Assignment to leadership jobs								
u. Amount of control over my job assignments								
v. Level of fairness in my performance evaluation	.66							
w. Technical/tactical competence of leadership	.78							
x. Availability of dependent medical and dental care						.68		
y. Quality and amount of training for MOS			.65					
z. Respect Army shows for spouses				.63				
aa. Overall preparation provided to get a civilian job		.72						
ab. Amount of educational benefits		.63						
ac. Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs		.53						
ad. Army Community Service Programs			.54					
ae. Quality of preseparation briefing		.68						
af. Child Care and Youth Services Programs								

(Continued)

Table 2: Factor Loadings for Satisfaction Ratings (Cont.)

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	FACTOR 6	FACTOR 7	FACTOR 8
ag. Quality of assistance by Army Career and Alumni Program		.70						
ah. Support and concerns Army leaders show for family				.74				
ai. Explanation of transition benefits and entitlements		.71						
aj. Adjustment of family to being an "Army family"								
ak. Amount of time for family and friends				.65				

Note: Loadings below .5 are not included.

Factor 1 was a leadership/supervision factor and was characterized by items such as *superiors' respect for me as a person* and *level of competence of supervisors*. Factor 2 was a benefits/support services factor and was characterized by items such as the *amount of educational benefits* and *child care and youth services programs*. Factor 3 focused more generally upon training and was best characterized by items such as *use of my skills and training on jobs* and *quality and amount of training for MOS*. Factor 4 focused on family issues and was characterized by items such as *respect Army shows for spouses* and *amount of time for family and friends*. Factor 5 was a personal benefits factor and included items such as *amount of basic pay*. Similarly, Factor 6 was a family benefits factor and was characterized best by the items *quality of family medical and dental care* and *availability of dependent medical and dental care*. Factor 7 was a PERSTEMPO factor and was characterized by two items, *amount of overseas duty* and *number of PCS relocations*. Finally, Factor 8 was difficult to interpret, with three seemingly unrelated items loading on this factor: *overall job fulfillment/challenge*, *overall enjoyment doing my job*, and *dependent facilities/schools*. However, these are major issues that may be reflective of overall quality of life.

The 37 importance ratings were also evaluated using a principle components factor analysis with a varimax rotation. Using the loading of .50 as a criterion value for inclusion in the interpretation of the factor, the factor analysis revealed 4 distinct factors that had eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Table 3 summarizes the factor loadings for the importance ratings.

Factor 1 was a personal/family needs factor, characterized by the importance of items such as *quality of family medical and dental care*, *dependent facilities/schools*, and *amount of time for personal needs*. Factor 2 focused on the support of job duties and family life, and was characterized by items such as *quality and amount of training for MOS* and *support and concerns Army leaders show for family*. Factor 3 was a job satisfaction factor, characterized best by the item *overall job fulfillment/challenge*. Finally, Factor 4 was a job location factor and was characterized by items such as *geographic location of jobs* and *amount of overseas duty*.

Because DAPE was interested in keeping items from the original ACTS which loaded on five factors (leadership/supervision, job satisfaction, organizational incentives/rewards, medical benefits, moving factors), we analyzed the reliability of these factors. Table 4 summarizes the reliability coefficients. Finally, a measure of reliability for the items requested by Army Housing was conducted and demonstrated excellent reliability (Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha = .86).[7]

[7] Reliability measures were calculated for the Army Housing items because the items added were new. Reliability was calculated for the DAPE items since many of the original items had changed.

Table 3: Factor Loadings for Importance Ratings

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4
a. Overall job fulfillment/challenge			.73	
b. Superiors' respect for me as a person			.81	
c. Overall enjoyment doing my job			.71	
d. Quality of leadership and management			.78	
e. Superiors' recognition of my accomplishments			.66	
f. Geographic location of job				.72
g. Level of competence of supervisors			.57	
h. Living conditions overseas				
i. Amount of overseas duty				.80
j. Number of PCS relocations				.81
k. Quality of family medical and dental care	.76			
l. Dependent facilities/schools	.58			
m. Amount of basic pay	.66			
n. Amount of special pay (such as bonuses)		.57		
o. Quality of military medical and dental care	.79			
p. Promotion/advancement opportunities	.63			
q. Assignment of jobs offering technical/professional development			.51	
r. Use of my skills and training on jobs			.51	
s. Amount of time for personal needs	.57			
t. Assignment to leadership jobs			.54	

Table 3: Factor Loadings for Importance Ratings

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4
u. Amount of control over my job assignments				
v. Level of fairness in my performance evaluation	.58			
w. Technical/tactical competence of leadership			.54	
x. Availability of dependent medical and dental care	.76			
y. Quality and amount of training for MOS		.63		
z. Respect Army shows for spouses		.50		
aa. Overall preparation provided to get a civilian job		.51		
ab. Amount of educational benefits	.68			
ac. Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs		.84		
ad. Army Community Service Programs		.82		
ae. Quality of preseparation briefing		.65		
af. Child Care and Youth Services Programs		.63		
ag. Quality of assistance by Army Career and Alumni Program		.67		
ah. Support and concerns Army leaders show for family	.60	.54		
ai. Explanation of transition benefits and entitlements	.59			
aj. Adjustment of family to being an "Army family"	.54	.63		
ak. Amount of time for family and friends	.53	.60		

Note: Loadings below .5 are not included.

Table 4: Reliability Coefficients for Satisfaction Factors (From Old ACTS)

Factor	Cronbach Coefficient Alpha
Leadership/ Supervisory (Items B,D,E,G,V)	.84
Job Satisfaction (Items A,C,Q,R,T,U)	.82
Organizational Incentives/Rewards (Items M,N,P)	.66
Medical Benefits (Items K,O,X)	.84
Moving Factors (Items F,H,I,J)	.68

Leadership Supplement

The ratings of 63 Leadership Supplement items were also evaluated using a principle components factor analysis with a varimax rotation. Using the loading of .50 as a criterion value for inclusion in the interpretation of the factor, the factor analysis revealed only two factors that had eigenvalues of greater than 1.0. Table 5 summarizes the factor loadings. The factor analysis did not reveal a factor structure to mirror the nine competencies requested by the Leadership Directorate (communication, planning, teaching and counseling, use of available systems, professional ethics, decision making, soldier team development, technical/tactical proficiency, and supervision) for which items had been written. There was no clear interpretation of the factors, as 22 of the 63 items (35%) loaded on both factors and the remaining items did not present a clear picture. Additional factor analyses were performed by the ARI project monitor to determine if interpretation could be improved. Even with the alternative oblique solution, interpretation remained problematic (see Tables 6a and 6b).

Table 5: Leadership Supplement Items Factor Loadings

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2
a. Provided appropriate information to do my job		.77
b. Provided accurate information		.76
c. Provided timely information		.78
d. Provided information for the group		.78
e. Listened to what others had to say		.64
f. Sought feedback from others	.56	.61
g. Presented information well		.71
h. Explained the reasons for his/her decisions	.52	.57
i. Included subordinate leaders in planning		.64
j. Identified actions the unit must take to meet unit's goals		.78
k. Attained resources needed to achieve unit's goals		.78
l. Monitored progress toward achieving unit's goals		.81
m. Took corrective action toward achieving unit's goals		.82
n. Identified the unit's long-term goals		.78
o. Provided advice and direction		.71
p. Praised in public	.53	.59
q. Criticized in private		
r. Treated others with fairness and dignity	.63	.58
s. Instructed on how to complete tasks		.70
t. Provided feedback on my performance	.54	.64
u. Encouraged training and development	.52	.66
v. Served as a positive role model	.58	.69
w. Passed appropriate information from superiors to subordinates		.74
x. Used professional network to gather information and get things done	.50	.73
y. Set high ethical standards for the units	.52	.66
z. Rewarded ethical behavior	.58	.61

(Continued)

Table 5: Leadership Supplement Items Factor Loadings (Cont.)

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2
aa. Reprimanded unethical behavior		
ab. Behaved in an ethical manner	.62	
ac. Applied rules fairly	.74	
ad. Respected individual rights	.70	
ae. Made decisions that were compatible with the unit's goals	.51	.64
af. Encouraged decision making at the lowest possible level	.71	
ag. Made clear decisions	.61	.59
ah. Made consistent decisions in similar situations	.61	.55
ai. Showed favoritism in decisions		
aj. Took responsibility for decisions	.67	.51
ak. Evaluated different alternatives before making a decision	.72	
al. Obtained appropriate information to make decisions	.70	.54
am. Developed realistic priorities for the team	.72	
an. Accepted honest mistakes from subordinates	.81	
ao. Encouraged prudent risk taking	.57	
ap. Clarified goals for the team	.66	.57
aq. Provided the opportunity for everyone to discuss concerns	.82	
ar. Encouraged sharing of information and ideas	.79	
as. Stressed team cooperation	.69	.50
at. Understood technical methods and procedures	.59	
au. Used innovative techniques and tactics	.63	.53
av. Offered reliable advice on technical and tactical methods	.73	
aw. Had the best technical/tactical knowledge in the unit	.62	.51
ax. Organized tasks efficiently	.73	.52
ay. Acted in a way that motivated soldiers	.76	
az. Coordinated different tasks within the unit	.60	.53

(Continued)

Table 5: Leadership Supplement Items Factor Loadings (Cont.)

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2
ba. Assigned various tasks and duties appropriately	.76	
bb. Delegated authority appropriately	.79	
bc. Coordinated tasks with other units	.67	
bd. Provided a supportive atmosphere for the unit	.75	
be. Offered opportunities for training	.70	
bf. Appraised performance accurately	.79	.52
bg. Gave orders appropriate to the situation	.72	
bh. Promoted good morale	.78	
bi. Disciplined for proper cause	.74	
bj. Anticipated problems in the unit	.67	.52
bk. Dealt fairly with complaints and problems	.76	

Note: A principle components factor analysis was used with a varimax rotation. The loading of .50 was used as a criterion value.

Table 6A: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings
Loadings ≥ .45

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Communications	a. Provided Appropriate Information to do the job		.83			
	b. Provided accurate information		.81			
	c. Provided timely information		.88			
	d. Provided information for the group		.90			
	e. Listened to what others had to say		.65			
	f. Sought feedback from others		.66			
	g. Presented information well		.74			
	h. Explained the reasons for his/her decisions		.65			
Planning	i. Included subordinate leaders in planning		.60			
	j. Identified actions the unit must take to meet unit's goals		.64			
	k. Attained resources needed to achieve unit's goals		.62			
	l. Monitored progress toward achieving unit's goals		.59			
	m. Took corrective action toward achieving unit's goals		.60			
	n. Identified the unit's long-term goals		.60			

(Continued)

Table 6A: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings (Cont.)

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Teaching/ Counseling	o. Provided advice and direction		.74			
	p. Praised in public		.45			
	q. Criticized in private					
	r. Treated others with fairness and dignity		.48			
	s. Instructed on how to complete tasks		.69			
	t. Provided feedback on my performance		.56			
	u. Encouraged training and development		.52			
	v. Served as a positive role model		.61			
Use of Available Systems	w. Passed appropriate information from superiors to subordinates		.65			
	x. Used professional network to gather information and get things done		.62			
Professional Ethnics	y. Set high ethical standards for the unit					
	z. Rewarded ethical behavior					
	aa. Reprimanded unethical behavior				.53	
	ab. Behaved in an ethical manner					
	ac. Applied rules fairly	.46				
	ad. Respected individual rights					

(Continued)

Table 6A: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings (Cont.)

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Decision Making	ae. Made decisions which were compatible wit unit's goals					
	af. Encouraged decision making at the lowest possible level	.47				
	ag. Made clear decisions	.45				
	ah. Made consistent decisions in similar situations					
	ai. Showed favoritism in decisions					
	aj. Took responsibilities for decisions	.55			.65	
	ak. Evaluated different alternatives before making a decision	.66				
	al. Obtained appropriate information to make decisions	.67				
Soldier Team Development	am. Developed realistic Priorities for Team	.76				
	an. Accepted honest mistakes from subordinates	.79				
	ao. Encouraged prudent risk taking	.71				
	ap. Clarified goals for the team	.68				
	aq. Provided the opportunity for everyone to discuss concerns	.89				
	ar. Encouraged sharing of information and ideas	.75				
	as. Stressed team cooperation	.77				

(Continued)

Table 6A: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings (Cont.)

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Technical/ Tactical Proficiency	at. Understood technical methods and procedures	.80				
	au. Used innovative techniques and tactics	.83				
	av. Offered reliable advice on technical and tactical methods	.89				
	aw. Had the best technical/tactical knowledge in unit	.81				
Supervision	ax. Organized tasks effectively	.78				
	ay. Acted in a way that motivated soldiers	.78				
	az. Coordinated different tasks within the unit	.71				
	ba. Assigned various tasks and duties appropriately	.91				
	bb. Delegated authority appropriately	.76				
	bc. Coordinated tasks with other units	.76				
	bd. Provided a supportive atmosphere for the unit	.70				
	be. Offered opportunities for training	.82				
	bf. Appraised performance accurately	.85				
	bg. Gave orders appropriately to the situation	.79				
	bh. Promoted good morale	.72				
	bi. Disciplined for proper cause	.70				
	bj. Anticipated problems in unit	.70				
	bk. Dealt fairly with complaints and problems	.72				

Table 6B: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings
Loadings ≥ .299

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Communications	a. Provided Appropriate Information to do the job		.83			
	b. Provided accurate information		.81			
	c. Provided timely information		.88			
	d. Provided information for the group		.90			
	e. Listened to what others had to say		.65			.31
	f. Sought feedback from others		.66			.32
	g. Presented information well		.74			
	h. Explained the reasons for his/her decisions		.65			.32
Planning	i. Included subordinate leaders in planning		.60			
	j. Identified actions the unit must take to meet unit's goals		.64			
	k. Attained resources needed to achieve unit's goals		.62			
	l. Monitored progress toward achieving unit's goals		.59	.35		
	m. Took corrective action toward achieving unit's goals		.60	.32	.34	
	n. Identified the unit's long-term goals		.60			

(Continued)

Table 6B: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings (Cont.)

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Teaching/ Counseling	o. Provided advice and direction		.74			
	p. Praised in public		.45			
	q. Criticized in private					
	r. Treated others with fairness and dignity		.48			
	s. Instructed on how to complete tasks		.69			
	t. Provided feedback on my performance	.33	.56			
	u. Encouraged training and development		.52			
	v. Served as a positive role model		.61			
Use of Available Systems	w. Passed appropriate information from superiors to subordinates		.65			
	x. Used professional network to gather information and get things done		.62			
Professional Ethnics	y. Set high ethical standards for the unit		.40		.40	
	z. Rewarded ethical behavior		.36			
	aa. Reprimanded unethical behavior				.53	
	ab. Behaved in an ethical manner	.33			.36	
	ac. Applied rules fairly	.46				
	ad. Respected individual rights	.38				

(Continued)

Table 6B: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings (Cont.)

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Decision Making	ae. Made decisions which were compatible wit unit's goals	.31			.37	
	af. Encouraged decision making at the lowest possible level	.47				
	ag. Made clear decisions	.45				
	ah. Made consistent decisions in similar situations	.38	.31			
	ai. Showed favoritism in decisions			.38		
	aj. Took responsibilities for decisions	.55			.65	
	ak. Evaluated different alternatives before making a decision	.66				
	al. Obtained appropriate information to make decisions	.67				
Soldier Team Development	am. Developed realistic Priorities for Team	.76				
	an. Accepted honest mistakes from subordinates	.79				
	ao. Encouraged prudent risk taking	.71				
	ap. Clarified goals for the team	.68				
	aq. Provided the opportunity for everyone to discuss concerns	.89				
	ar. Encouraged sharing of information and ideas	.75				
	as. Stressed team cooperation	.77				

(Continued)

Table 6B: Competency Matrix Factor Loadings (Cont.)

COMPETENCY	ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
Technical/ Tactical Proficiency	at. Understood technical methods and procedures	.80				
	au. Used innovative techniques and tactics	.83				
	av. Offered reliable advice on technical and tactical methods	.89				
	aw. Had the best technical/tactical knowledge in unit	.81				
Supervision	ax. Organized tasks effectively	.78				
	ay. Acted in a way that motivated soldiers	.78				
	az. Coordinated different tasks within the unit	.71				
	ba. Assigned various tasks and duties appropriately	.91				
	bb. Delegated authority appropriately	.76				
	bc. Coordinated tasks with other units	.76				
	bd. Provided a supportive atmosphere for the unit	.70				
	be. Offered opportunities for training	.82				
	bf. Appraised performance accurately	.85				
	bg. Gave orders appropriately to the situation	.79				
	bh. Promoted good morale	.72				
	bi. Disciplined for proper cause	.70				
	bj. Anticipated problems in unit	.70				
	bk. Dealt fairly with complaints and problems	.72				

As an alternative to factor analysis, a measure of reliability for each of the competencies was calculated. The results are summarized in Table 7. The results show that the items which comprise the competencies are highly reliable. Because these competencies were not distinguishable in the factor analysis, we attempted to ascertain if the competencies were correlated by using a Pearson correlation. As Table 8 clearly shows, the competencies or composite measures are all highly and significantly intercorrelated.

There are numerous reasons why we are unable to clearly distinguish the various factors. For one, the original competencies, as they were derived in 1976 by the U.S. Army Administration Center, were not factor analyzed. By contrast, they were derived from an "interpretive analysis of a significant portion of the leadership and management literature" (Clement & Ayres, 1976, p. 13). This "interpretive analysis" was not statistically derived, but essentially involved reading the literature and synthesizing the skill and behavioral categories of leadership and management. It is within this context that one can understand why there is such ambiguity surrounding the factor structure.

It is reasonable to assume that the nine concepts are not mutually exclusive. For example, *supervision* and *planning* are arguably intricately related, with the former competency being broader and subsuming the latter. In this case, planning can easily be considered one facet of the larger and more inclusive supervision category.

The competencies themselves are broadly conceptualized and loosely defined; and as such, they overlap considerably with other competencies. For example, in *teaching and counseling*, it is clear from the definition that this competency refers to "improving performance by overcoming problems, increasing knowledge, or gaining new perspectives and skills" (Military Leadership, 1990, p. 67). Yet, *training and counseling* is also inextricably connected to another competency, namely *technical and tactical proficiency*. Specifically,

> "Teaching your soldiers is the only way ...[to] truly prepare them to succeed and survive in combat. You must be able to train your soldiers, maintain and employ your equipment, and provide combat power to help win battles. You have to know your job so that you can train your soldiers, employ your weapons systems and help your leader employ your unit" (see Military Leadership, 1990, p. 67).

It is not difficult to see how the *training and counseling* competency substantively overlaps with *technical and tactical proficiency*.

Table 7: Leadership Supplement Reliability Coefficients

Competency	Cronbach Coefficient Alpha
Communication Competency (Items A-H)	.94
Planning Competency (Items I-N)	.93
Teaching/ Counseling Competency (Items O-V)	.93
Use of Available Systems Competency (Items W-X)	.89
Professional Ethics Competency (Items Y-AD)	.90
Decision Making Competency (Items AE-AL)	.88
Soldier Team Development Competency (Items AN-AS)	.93
Technical/ Tactical Proficiency Competency (Items AT-AW)	.92
Supervision Competency (Items AX--BK)	.97

Table 8: Leadership Supplement Intercorrelations

	COMMCPT	PLANCPT	TEACHCS	AVAILSY	PROFETH	DECISMK	TEAMDEV	TPROFIC	SUPERVS
COMMCPT: COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY	1.00000 0.0	0.82580 0.0001	0.88116 0.0001	0.85145 0.0001	0.80284 0.0001	0.81404 0.0001	0.79555 0.0001	0.74615 0.0001	0.81621 0.0001
PLANCPT: PLANNING COMPETENCY	0.82580 0.0001	1.00000 0.0	0.81684 0.0001	0.78318 0.0001	0.75855 0.0001	0.78434 0.0001	0.71635 0.0001	0.72701 0.0001	0.77697 0.0001
TEACHCS: TEACHING COUNSELING	0.88116 0.0001	0.81684 0.0001	1.00000 0.0	0.85957 0.0001	0.85441 0.0001	0.84040 0.0001	0.82835 0.0001	0.77468 0.0001	0.86694 0.0001
AVAILSY: USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS	0.85145 0.0001	0.78318 0.0001	0.85957 0.0001	1.00000 0.0	0.78822 0.0001	0.80868 0.0001	0.75573 0.0001	0.71508 0.0001	0.80617 0.0001
PROFETH: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS	0.80284 0.0001	0.75855 0.0001	0.85441 0.0001	0.78822 0.0001	1.00000 0.0	0.86404 0.0001	0.85070 0.0001	0.76626 0.0001	0.86982 0.0001
DECISMK: DECISION MAKING	0.81404 0.0001	0.78434 0.0001	0.84040 0.0001	0.80868 0.0001	0.86404 0.0001	1.00000 0.0	0.85750 0.0001	0.82044 0.0001	0.90048 0.0001
TEAMDEV: SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT	0.79555 0.0001	0.71635 0.0001	0.82835 0.0001	0.75573 0.0001	0.85070 0.0001	0.85750 0.0001	1.00000 0.0	0.81570 0.0001	0.91956 0.0001
TPROFIC: TECHNICAL/TACTICAL PROFICIENCY	0.74615 0.0001	0.72701 0.0001	0.77468 0.0001	0.71508 0.0001	0.76626 0.0001	0.82044 0.0001	0.81570 0.0001	1.00000 0.0	0.85358 0.0001
SUPERVS: SUPERVISION	0.81621 0.0001	0.77697 0.0001	0.86694 0.0001	0.80617 0.0001	0.86982 0.0001	0.90048 0.0001	0.91956 0.0001	0.85358 0.0001	1.00000 0.0

This overlap has been noted since the competencies were first established in 1976. In fact, Clement and Ayres (1976) cautioned that "a certain amount of redundancy exists in the treatment of each dimension because of the considerable overlap between them" (p. 21).

Here, too, the issue first surfaced by those who originally defined the competencies. As they noted:

> "A definition serves the purpose of a map. Any attempt to completely explain a complex term (e.g., 'leadership') can only result in a map so detailed [that it is] the equivalent of the 'territory' it is intended to represent. Thus, the map loses its functional value. For this reasons, the reader will note ...a number of terms which are described rather than specifically defined. It will be left up to the reader to construct an appropriate definition of each dimension" (Clement & Ayres, 1976, p. 5).

However, it is important to recognize, that despite the lack of discernable factors, the current revision of the Leadership Supplement is a substantial improvement over the original. Inasmuch as the original made no a priori attempt to base itself on Army Leadership competencies, and because of its lack of factor structure, its utility was highly questionable. The revised Leadership Supplement, on the other hand, is based on competencies that were deemed necessary by the Leadership Directorate and by the literature to a lesser extent, and provides measures that are reliable.

Modifications to the Revised ACTS

After the pilot test, it was apparent that several survey items needed to be modified. On item 6 (i.e., Will family members file for unemployment compensation?), a *not applicable* response option should be added to accommodate those respondents without a spouse or dependents. For item 7, the respondent should be given instructions to refrain from choosing *not applicable* if it is an inappropriate response (e.g., for instance, when rating satisfaction and importance of overall job fulfillment/challenge). For item 8 (During your Army career, how often did you live in (a) government owned/leased housing or (b) off-post housing), part (a) should be rewritten to reduce ambiguity; item 8a would be better if not double barrelled and it should refer only to on-post housing. After item 8, respondents should be given instructions to skip over item 9 (comparing on-post and off-post living arrangements) if they indicated on item 8 that they had not lived in both on- and off-post housing. After the pilot study, feedback from the sponsor; as well as a review from HumRRO staff, indicated that some items may have been ambiguous or redundant with other items on the Leadership Supplement. These items and the recommendation for each, as well as the impact on reliability (where needed) is listed. Suggested changes to item 18 of the Leadership Supplement are included in Table 9.

Data tracking also posed a problem. Currently, respondents are requested to provide the zipcode of their most recent duty station (item 38), which can ultimately be linked to individual installations. This proved somewhat problematic because a number of individuals failed to furnish this information (4.87%). To improve the response rate to this item, several alternatives can be considered. The first option is to have ARI personnel check the completed surveys after shipment to insure that a zipcode has been provided on each. If a survey is missing location data, zipcode information from the shipment envelope should be entered. The other alternative is to assign each post a permanent ID code, to have transition site personnel instruct soldiers to record this number on their surveys, and then have the transition personnel verify the surveys for zipcode completion. Among the alternatives, the former option (i.e., verification by ARI personnel) appears to be the best choice, simply because the circumstances are most preferred (i.e., less time pressure, fewer individuals involved in verification, and less room for error).

Recommendations

Determine Target Goals

The data derived from the revised ACTS, regardless of its validity and reliability, will be meaningless until sponsors determine how the data should be used and what performance standards are acceptable. For example, if a sponsor wishes to ascertain "problem" areas (e.g., where there is a gap between what is desired and what is actual), the question remains "what constitutes a problem area?" Furthermore, if changes are to result, another question remains "what constitutes an improvement?" If 75% of soldiers are satisfied or highly satisfied with leadership, is the remaining 25% who have neutral or unfavorable feelings toward leadership a problem? If the Army determines that they are,

Table 9: Leadership Supplement (Item 18) Suggested Revisions

ITEM LETTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ITEM	IMPACT ON RELIABILITY
A.	Provided appropriate information to do my job	REVISE: Provided relevant information required to do my job	UNKNOWN: NO PILOT DATA
B.	Provided accurate information	REVISE: Provided accurate information for the job I did	UNKNOWN: NO PILOT DATA
C.	Provided timely information	REVISE: Provided timely information for the job I did	UNKNOWN: NO PILOT DATA
D.	Provided information for the group	REVISE: Provided relevant information for group tasks	UNKNOWN: NO PILOT DATA
P.	Praised in public	DELETE	RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT ALPHA GOES FROM .93 TO .94
Q.	Criticized in private	DELETE	RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT ALPHA GOES FROM .93 TO .94
AI.	Showed favoritism in decisions	DELETE	RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT ALPHA GOES FROM .88 TO .94

what will be an acceptable percent of satisfied soldiers? Unless target goals are determined, either for the Army as a whole or for specific Army units, the ACTS data will yield frustration more than useful indications.

Provide Sponsors with Feedback

In our interview with USAREC, their main request was to change ACTS reporting, not the instrument itself. Specifically, USAREC would like to receive trend data: data which show changes over longer time frames and are not as suspectable to volatility associated with particular time periods. We believe that this request is not only reasonable, but fundamental for the proper interpretation of ACTS data. Data from this revised instrument should not be interpreted based on quarterly changes. Instead, future projections should be made in comparison to baseline data, that will have to be developed. It is inappropriate to react to short-term changes in satisfaction levels by respondents, especially if response rates are low. Only when a standard of comparison (baseline) is used should any action legitimately be taken in response to changes in satisfaction profiles.

Another recommendation is to provide prospective sponsors and other users with readily accessible ACTS quarterly data reports. Specifically, a topical report could be produced and disseminated (see Topics example in Appendix E). This topical report could be written in a newsletter format, include minimal technical detail, and rotate between interesting data findings and particular topics of interest, including those topics which are specifically requested. These reports could highlight the practical value of the ACTS data, and moreover ARI research, by providing important data in a clear and concise manner.

Take a Long-Term Look at the Revised ACTS

It is important to remember that the pilot test of the revised ACTS does not guarantee its efficacy. The effectiveness of the instrument must be gauged over a longer period of time and considered against an array of different variables which follow:

- Sponsor Satisfaction. Sponsors should be solicited for their feedback, on an ongoing basis, specifically regarding their satisfaction with the ACTS data, any changes they wish to make, and the extent that they desire statistical and survey changes. As the purpose of the ACTS is to feedback information to the sponsor, we need to ensure that their needs are being met. ARI should be responsive to the sponsors' varied needs whenever possible and maintain documentation of problems and necessary changes so that the ACTS can be later reviewed fully.

- Response Rate. The low response rate of the original ACTS, coupled with the difficulty collecting data during the pilot of the revised ACTS, may indicate administration pitfalls, especially over time. Unless the recommended administrative changes are made, it is unlikely that the response rate will increase in the long term. We would also argue that

without a greater representation from exiting soldiers, the ACTS will not provide valid data and will be essentially useless as a diagnostic or predictive instrument.

As a result, we recommend that the administrative changes be implemented in full force and reconsidered within one year. If a significant increase in the response rate is not evident, we would recommend that the ACTS be abolished and the necessary data be collected using other methods. If the response rate increases, we urge that a full review take place, such that all the sponsors provide ARI with written comments regarding the utility of the data and how the data have been used, as well as reasons why the survey should be continued. If such support for the instrument does not exist, and the instrument is not deemed cost effective or worthwhile, we would also suggest that the ACTS be abolished.

- Leadership Supplement: Determine Functional Utility to Pinpoint Specific Leaders and Units. The revised Leadership Supplement presents the opportunity to determine whether certain measured competencies deemed important by the Leadership Directorate can be used to appropriately pinpoint dysfunctional leadership by individual leaders or within units. Ultimately, future analyses will need to segment responses by rater and ratee, as well as by unit, in order to gather useful longitudinal data about the performance measures provided by the Leadership Supplement.

The ability of the Leadership Supplement (as opposed to other instruments) to assess competencies in the Army is the essential question. Ultimately, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the ACTS in comparison to other specifically tailored instruments must be weighed.

Conclusions: Considerations and Cautions

Giacalone (1993) prescribed four primary and three secondary recommendations for establishing the ACTS as an effective exit survey instrument. The primary recommendations were to: 1) update and revise the satisfaction measures, 2) mandate consistent administration procedures, 3) measure the impact of respondent identification, and 4) establish the utility. Secondary recommendations were to: 1) eliminate the Leadership Supplement and replace it with more reliable measures, 2) establish a computerized version of the ACTS, and 3) measure the comparative efficacy of the ACTS to other instruments currently used by the Army. The current revisions addressed two of the primary recommendations: revision of the satisfaction items and administration procedures, and one of the secondary recommendations, the creation of an entirely new Leadership Supplement.

It is important that we remember all of the recommendations. We must still consider the issues that have not been resolved:

The Impact of Identification of ACTS Responses Is Yet Unknown

The impact of identifying the respondents, and the resulting lack of confidentiality, (Giacalone & Knouse, 1989; Jablonski, 1975; Woods & Macaulay, 1987; Zaradona & Camuso, 1985) pervades exit survey literature. Great amounts of data suggest that when an exit survey respondent is identified, the individual's responses can be distorted. Giacalone, Elig, Ginexi and Bright (1995) compared respondents who included their social security number on the ACTS to those who did not; this research revealed a significant difference in how the two groups responded to many of the satisfaction items. Because similar satisfaction items were used in the revised ACTS, this concern remains. Although we have moved the identifying demographic questions to the end of the survey, which may reduce the potential for distortion, we have yet to conclude how much. As the initial critique pointed out, it is still important to determine: 1) the extent to which this distortion exists, 2) the items on which it exists, and 3) the statistical adjustments that might be necessary to overcome this problem.

The Impact of Type of Separation on ACTS Responses Is Yet Unknown

Giacalone (1993) also noted that employees who separate involuntarily may view their separation (and their previous employment) very negatively, which may result in the intentional distortion of their evaluation. Great discrepancies have been found between responses at the time of separation and later on during the follow-up evaluation (Lefkowitz & Katz, 1969).

Giacalone, Elig, Ginexi, and Bright (1995) also found that voluntary and involuntary groups respond very differently. Some researchers even advocate eliminating those who have involuntarily separated from the data collection altogether (Goodale, 1982; Garrison & Ferguson, 1977; Sherwood, 1983). Given these findings, it appears that the impact of this variable on responses should be investigated, perhaps by analyzing the two groups separately.

The Utility of the ACTS Has Not Yet Been Established

One important aspect of the Giacalone (1993) critique was that the literature on exit surveys was replete with questions regarding the reliability and validity of the exit interview and survey process; and therefore, that the ACTS itself was subject to the same reliability and validity problems. Essentially, the question surrounding any exit survey process is whether the data collected accurately represents the feelings, satisfactions, and perceptions of separating personnel. Studies by Hinrichs (1971), as well as Zaradona and Camuso (1985), showed that separating personnel do not always give their actual reasons for leaving; often times, the more significant factors involved in the decision to separate are often underreported (Woods & Macauley, 1987). While the revisions may have addressed some of the problems, the scope of the contract did not allow for a large scale,

longitudinal study of utility. It would be important to consider such a study in the near future.

Establish a Computerized ACTS

In 1993, an initiative from ARI was to conduct surveys more quickly, and in a less expensive manner. At the time, it was recommended that the revised ACTS be computerized. While many advantages to computerizing the ACTS were highlighted (e.g., increases accuracy of responses, quicker surveying time, more easily and quickly adapted for special topics, quicker reporting time to sponsors), the branching capability and the flexibility of computerized surveys, were the primary reasons for computerizing the ACTS. The branching capabilities (where survey items are selected for inclusion in the survey based on the respondent's previous answers) would allow the Army to probe for specifics from respondents who held negative views of various aspects of Army life. For example, if a respondent rated Army leadership as unsatisfactory, that respondent could then be asked additional questions about specific aspects of Army leadership so as to identify the particular dimensions which caused dissatisfaction; respondents who did not express dissatisfaction would not be asked these additional questions. Given the interviews with sponsors, it is reasonable to assume that, if permitted, the Commands would want more detailed data from respondents. Without a branching capability, soliciting such detail from respondents would render the ACTS prohibitively long. Perhaps, more importantly, the revised ACTS currently remains somewhat inflexible; its inability to quickly assimilate new items arising from a changing Army will no doubt hamper quick response time and also require numerous costly revisions in the future. We would urge that computerization of the ACTS be reconsidered.

The Comparative Efficacy of the Revised ACTS is Unknown

Because one underlying goal of the ACTS is to gather data that are only available during periods of separation, the question remains as to whether it provides better (and more critical) data than other instruments focusing on similar issues (e.g., STAMP or SSMP). We would argue that this issue goes beyond whether the revised ACTS is an effective data collection tool. More importantly, the issue is whether the data collected compares in quality to other surveys currently in use, and the extent to which redundant questionnaires are providing more or less appropriate or biased data. From the perspective of cost-savings alone, a future study should determine where overlap exists with other surveys, the benefits (if any) of that overlap, and the rewards of using the ACTS in conjunction with (or in replacement of) other instruments.

Conclusions

The merit of exit surveys is based on the comparative advantage an organization can gain by soliciting feedback from those whose fears (of political retribution or impact on personal life) have been substantially decreased. The assumption, still untested in the ACTS, is that the Army can receive more honest feedback from exiting personnel and can therefore mitigate problem areas and more clearly understand strengths. No exit survey should be used for the sake of gathering data that can be gathered more

effectively in other ways. Similarly, unless there is an a priori reason to believe that the responses of exiting soldiers can be used as a useful comparison sample (e.g., comparing leaving soldiers to those who choose to stay), the ACTS would appear to be unjustified. Only when comparing its merit can the continued use of the ACTS be fully defended. We would urge the Army to make this assessment in the near future so that a reasonable judgment can be made about the utility and cost effectiveness of continuing to use the ACTS.

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APPENDIX A

Command Interview Source Information

Command Interview Source Information

Contact Person	Area	Date of Meeting	Phone
PAULINE BOTEHLO SUSAN HARVEY	ARMY CAREER AND ALUMNI PROGRAM	JUNE 8, 1994	(703) 325-3591 (703) 325-4745
REPRESENTATIVES	RETIREMENT SERVICE OFFICE	JUNE 8, 1994	(703) 325-2697
COL. MICHAEL SHANE (MPE) COL. HENNING (MPO) COL. DURDEN (MPA)	DAPE (MPE, MPO, MPA)	JUNE 29, 1994	(703) 695-0986
GWEN KNEUVEN	ARMY HOUSING	JUNE 29, 1994	(703) 355-8384
LTC. HARRY CHRISTIANSEN	LEADERSHIP DIRECTORATE	JULY 15, 1994	(703) 697-8990
MR. RICHARD FARFARA	COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER PLANS AND POLICY DIRECTORATE PLANS DIVISION	SEPTEMBER 15, 1994	(703) 325-4356
COL. JOHN MYERS	DIRECTORATE OF ADVERTISING ANDPUBLIC AFFAIRS, USAREC	JUNE 29, 1994	(502) 464-0530

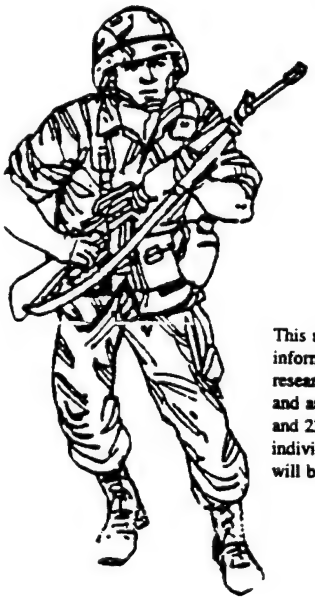
APPENDIX B

The Army Career Transitions Survey

The Army Career Transitions Survey

Instructions:

Your sincere responses to the following questions are needed to help improve decisions affecting Army personnel.



Use a number two pencil only
Fill circle completely
Make no stray marks
Erase changes completely

This notification is to inform you of who is conducting this survey and what use will be made of the information being collected, in accordance with Public Law 93-573 and the Privacy Act of 1974. This research is authorized by Acts of Congress which authorize recruitment and maintenance of military forces and authorize research to accomplish this goal. This authority is in 10 United States Code, Section 137, 503, and 2358. The use of Social Security Numbers is authorized by Executive Order 9397. Information on individuals is confidential and will not be used by nor released to anyone. Information on groups of soldiers will be used only for research and policy analyses.

1. What is the current month and year?

Month

Year

19

2. How many years of active duty service have you completed (including enlisted, warrant officer, and commissioned officer time)?

Years

0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

3. Have you found civilian employment?

Yes
No

4. Will you seek employment immediately after separation?

Yes
No

5. Will you file for unemployment compensation?

Yes
No

6. Will family members file for unemployment compensation?

Yes
No

7. Listed below are different aspects of Army life. Please review the list and rate how IMPORTANT each is/was to you by marking a circle on the left (1 = very important through 5 = not at all important). Indicate how SATISFIED you are/were with each element by marking a circle in the column on the right.

	Very Important 1	2	3	4	Not at all Important 5	Not Applicable	Very Satisfied 1	2	3	4 Very Dissatisfied
a. Overall job fulfillment/challenge										
b. Superiors' respect for me as a person										
c. Overall enjoyment doing my job										
d. Quality of leadership and management										
e. Superiors' recognition of my accomplishments										
f. Geographic location of jobs										
g. Level of competence of supervisors										
h. Living conditions overseas										
i. Amount of overseas duty										
j. Number of PCS relocations										
k. Quality of family medical and dental care										
l. Dependent facilities/schools										
m. Amount of basic pay										
n. Amount of special pay (such as bonuses)										
o. Quality of military medical and dental care										
p. Promotion/advancement opportunities										
q. Assignment to jobs offering technical/ professional development										
r. Use of my skills and training on jobs										
s. Amount of time for personal needs										
t. Assignment to leadership jobs										
u. Amount of control over my job assignments										
v. Level of fairness in my performance evaluation										
w. Technical/tactical competence of leadership										
x. Availability of dependent medical and dental care										
y. Quality and amount of training for MOS										
z. Respect Army shows for spouses										
aa. Overall preparation provided to get a civilian job										
ab. Amount of educational benefits										
ac. Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs										
ad. Army Community Service Programs										
ae. Quality of preseparation briefing										
af. Child Care and Youth Services Programs										
ag. Quality of assistance by Army Career and Alumni Program										
ah. Support and concerns Army leaders show for family										
ai. Explanation of transition benefits and entitlements										
aj. Adjustment of family to being an "Army family"										
ak. Amount of time for family and friends										

8. During your Army career, how often did you...	never	once	twice	three times	more than three times
a. ...live in government owned/leased housing?					
b. ...live in off-post housing?					

SURVEY METER DARK

9. In your experience, how do on-post and off-post living arrangements compare in the following aspects?

	On-post housing definitely superior	On-post housing somewhat superior	On-post & Off-post housing about the same	Off-post housing somewhat superior	Off-post housing definitely superior
a. Availability					
b. Cost					
c. Security					
d. Environment					
e. Recreational access					
f. Convenience/location					
g. Privacy					
h. Quality of housing					
i. Readiness to deploy					

10. All things considered did/would you:

Definitely prefer on-post housing	Somewhat prefer on-post housing	Have little preference	Somewhat prefer off-post housing	Definitely prefer off-post housing

11. How important was non-availability of on-post housing to your decision to leave the Army?

Definitely not important
Probably not important
Probably very important
Definitely very important

12. Which ONE phrase *best* describes the kind of people you worked with on a daily basis in your last assignment?

All military
Most were military, some were civilian employees
About half were military and half civilian employees
Most were civilian employees, some were military
All civilian employees

13. Indicate the grade of your immediate *civilian* supervisor on your last assignment.

Does not apply, my supervisor was military.
GS 10 (or equivalent) or lower
GS 11-12 (or equivalent)
GS/GM 13 (or equivalent)
GS/GM 14 (or equivalent)
GS/GM 15 (or equivalent) or higher

14. Indicate the rank of your immediate *military* supervisor on your last assignment.

Does not apply, my supervisor was civilian

CSM/SGM	WO1	2LT
1SG/MSG	CW2	1LT
SFC	CW3	CPT
SSG	CW4	MAJ
SGT	MW4/5	LTC
CPL		COL or higher

15. Indicate the leadership position of your immediate *military* supervisor on your last assignment.

Does not apply, my supervisor was civilian
Leadership position higher than brigade level (e.g., division, corps)
Brigade Commander
Brigade Staff Officer
Brigade Command Sergeant Major
Battalion Commander
Battalion Staff Officer
Battalion Command Sergeant Major
Company or Battery Commander
Company or Battery Staff Officer
First Sergeant
Platoon/Section Leader (officers)
Platoon Sergeant
Section Leader (enlisted)
Squad Leader
Other leadership position

16. About how long did you serve under your immediate supervisor on your last assignment?

- Less than 4 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-12 months
- 13-18 months
- 19-24 months
- 25 or more months

17. Which of the following best describes how frequently you interacted with your immediate supervisor?

- at least once a day
- at least once a week
- at least once a month
- less than once a month

18. Each of the statements below describes ways that supervisors may or may not behave. For each of the following statements, indicate to what extent the statement describes your most recent direct supervisor in the Army. Mark a response for each statement.

	My supervisor Always Did This	My supervisor Usually Did This	Unsure Whether My Supervisor Did This	My Supervisor Usually Did Not Do This	My Supervisor Never Did This
a. Provided appropriate information to do my job					
b. Provided accurate information					
c. Provided timely information					
d. Provided information for the group					
e. Listened to what others had to say					
f. Sought feedback from others					
g. Presented information well					
h. Explained the reasons for his/her decisions					
i. Included subordinate leaders in planning					
j. Identified actions the unit must take to meet unit's goals					
k. Attained resources needed to achieve unit's goals					
l. Monitored progress toward achieving unit's goals					
m. Took corrective action toward achieving unit's goals					
n. Identified the unit's long-term goals					
o. Provided advice and direction					
p. Praised in public					
q. Criticized in private					
r. Treated others with fairness and dignity					
s. Instructed on how to complete tasks					
t. Provided feedback on my performance					
u. Encouraged training and development					
v. Served as a positive role model					
w. Passed appropriate information from superiors to subordinates					
x. Used professional network to gather information and get things done					
y. Set high ethical standards for the unit					
z. Rewarded ethical behavior					

18. (Continued)Each of the statements below describes ways that supervisors may or may not behave. For each of the following statements, indicate to what extent the statement describes your most recent direct supervisor in the Army. Mark a response for each statement.

	My supervisor Always Did This	Usually Did This	Unsure Whether My Supervisor Did This	My Supervisor Usually Did Not Do This	Never Did This
aa. Reprimanded unethical behavior					
ab Behaved in an ethical manner					
ac. Applied rules fairly					
ad. Respected individual rights					
ae. Made decisions that were compatible with the unit's goals					
af. Encouraged decision making at the lowest possible level					
ag. Made clear decisions					
ah. Made consistent decisions in similar situations					
ai. Showed favoritism in decisions					
aj. Took responsibility for decisions					
ak. Evaluated different alternatives before making a decision					
al. Obtained appropriate information to make decisions					
am. Developed realistic priorities for the team					
an. Accepted honest mistakes from subordinates					
ao. Encouraged prudent risk taking					
ap. Clarified goals for the team					
aq. Provided the opportunity for everyone to discuss concerns					
ar. Encouraged sharing of information and ideas					
as. Stressed team cooperation					
at. Understood technical methods and procedures					
au. Used innovative techniques and tactics					
av. Offered reliable advice on technical and tactical methods					
aw. Had the best technical/tactical knowledge in the unit					
ax. Organized tasks efficiently					
ay. Acted in a way that motivated soldiers					
az. Coordinated different tasks within the unit					
ba. Assigned various tasks and duties appropriately					
bb. Delegated authority appropriately					
bc. Coordinated tasks with other units					
bd. Provided a supportive atmosphere for the unit					
be. Offered opportunities for training					
bf. Appraised performance accurately					
bg. Gave orders appropriate to the situation					
bh. Promoted good morale					
bi. Disciplined for proper cause					
bj. Anticipated problems in the unit					
bk. Dealt fairly with complaints and problems					

19. To which major command, agency, or field operating agency are/were you assigned?

US Army Europe and Seventh Army (USAREUR)
US Army Pacific (USARPAC)
8th US Army, Korea (EUSA)
US Army South (USARSO)
US Army Materiel Command (AMC)
Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC)
US Army Criminal Investigation Command (CIDC)
US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM)
US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC)
US Army Health Services Command (HSC)
US Army Information Systems Command (USAISC)
US Army Military District of Washington (MDW)
Secretary of Defense or Joint Activity (JSC, DIA, and Other Defense Agencies)
US Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM)
US Military Academy (USMA)
US Army Recruiting Command (USAREC)
US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)
US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC)
Army Staff or Field Operating Agencies
Other

20. To which specific type of unit are/were you assigned?

Does not apply; I am assigned to Corps, MACOM, HQDA, JCS, or DoD office.
Adjutant General
Air Defense Artillery
Airborne/Air Assault
Armor
Aviation
Chemical
Civil Affairs
Engineer
Field Artillery
Finance
Infantry
Legal
Medical
Military Intelligence
Military Police
Ordnance
Quartermaster
Signal
Special Forces or Ranger
Staff; Installation/Garrison
Training, including staff or faculty at Army school
Transportation
Other

21. What is your rank?

PV1	SSG	WO1	2LT
PV2	SFC	CW2	1LT
PFC	MSG	CW3	CPT
SPC	1SG	CW4	MAJ
CPL	SGM	MW4	LTC
SGT	CSM	MW5	COL or higher

22. What was your Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) (IF ENLISTED OR WARRANT OFFICER) or your primary Area of Concentration (AOC) (IF COMMISSIONED OFFICER)?

Warrant MOS

Enlisted MOS or Officer AOC

23. Have you been working in your primary MOS/AOC for the past year?

Yes

No (If NO, please skip to 26)

24. When was the last time you performed critical tasks in your primary MOS/AOC?

within the past month

1 to 2 months ago

3 to 4 months ago

5 to 6 months ago

more than 6 months ago (Please skip to 26)

25. How frequently, in the past 6 months, did you perform tasks critical to your MOS/AOC?

I performed them on a weekly basis

I performed them monthly

I performed them only a few times

I didn't perform them at all

26. For each point listed below, rate your ability to perform the tasks that are critical to your MOS/AOC

Very good | Above average | About average | A bit weak | Not good at all

In the past:

a. At the end of your Initial Training

b. Later, at the peak of your ability

At present:

c. Now, with no refresher training

d. Now, if you were given two weeks of refre. training

In the future:

e. One year from now, with no retraining

f. One year from now, after two weeks of refresher training

27. Would you be interested in being recalled sometime during the next 3 years for a paid, two week training exercise as a member of the Individual Ready Reserve?

I am not interested

I might be interested, depending on other things (school, job, etc.)

I am very interested

28. Would you be interested in volunteering for an overseas mission, such as peacekeeping, for up to one year, as a member of the Individual Ready Reserve?

I am not interested

I might be interested, depending on other things (school, job, etc.)

I am very interested

29. After separation, do you plan to look for a job that is similar to your primary MOS/AOC?

No

Yes

I have not decided

30. What is your highest level of education

Less than High School

G.E.D./Equivalent

High School Diploma

Other

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Doctorate

31. Are you...

Commissioned Officer?
Warrant Officer?
Enlisted?

32. What is your current Army transition status?

ETS (enlisted)
Retirement
Voluntary separation before ETS (enlisted) or with remaining obligated period (officer)
Voluntary separation before retirement for officers without remaining obligated period
Involuntary separation
Other (please specify)

33. Are you...

Male
Female

34. What race do you consider yourself to be?

(Mark only one)

White	Eskimo or Aleut
Black or African American	Asian or Pacific Islander
	Indian (American)
Other (specify)_____	

35. Are you of Spanish/Hispanic origin?

(Mark only one)

No
Yes; Mexican American, Mexican, Chicano
Yes; Puerto Rican
Yes; Cuban
Yes; Other Spanish/Hispanic

36. What is your current marital status?

(Mark only one)

Single and never married
Married for the first time
Remarried; Was divorced or widowed
Separated due to marital problems but no legal action taken
Legally separated or filing for divorce
Divorced
Widowed

37. Is your spouse...(Mark all that apply)

...Employed in a civilian job?
...In School?
...Active Duty Military?
Is he/she taking VSI/SSB?
No
Yes, Voluntary Separation Incentive
Yes, Special Separation Benefit

Does not apply, not married

38. Please enter the zip code/APO of your most recent duty station.

39. What is your Social Security Number?

	-	-	
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9			

APPENDIX C

Administration Instructions

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR PERSONNEL
300 ARMY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0300

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

07 FEB 1995

Dear Army Colleague,

I need your help in administering the Army Career Transitions Survey (ACTS). The population for this survey is all enlisted and officer personnel who are voluntarily leaving the Army, including retirees. As you can see by reviewing the ACTS, we are interested in obtaining the opinions of those separating from the Army on a whole range of issues, including family programs, job training and assignment, and quality of leadership. No one is in a better position to provide this information than those who are completing their tour of duty, and thus have experienced the whole range of Army life.

We realize that you have many responsibilities, and we would not impose yet another if it were not of the utmost importance. The data provided by separatees will allow us to improve our policies and programs to the benefit of the entire Army family.

In order to avoid problems associated with trying to administer a survey at the time of outprocessing, please arrange time for each separatee (individually or in groups) to complete the ACTS during pre-separation counseling. Although participation is voluntary, please stress to each individual that their input will be used to improve Army life for all of those who follow in their footsteps. The survey is relatively short, and should take only 15-20 minutes to complete.

Please take a moment to review the instructions printed in the survey itself so that you will be prepared to answer any questions respondents may have. Labels are enclosed with the surveys so that you can return the completed forms to the correct location.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have any questions about the ACTS, feel free to contact Dr. Ronald B. Tiggle at the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral Sciences. He can be reached at (703) 274-8295 or DSN 284-8295 from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM (Eastern) weekdays. He will answer any inquiries you may have.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. Sikora
Major General, U.S. Army
Director of Military
Personnel Management

Printed on Recycled Paper

ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for your assistance in administering the newly-revised Army Career Transitions Survey (ACTS). There are several things that we are interested in finding out in this pretest, including:

- On average, how long does it take respondents to fill out the ACTS?
- Are there confusing or difficult-to-answer items that need to be reworked or deleted?
- Are the options all inclusive? That is, do the alternatives cover the entire range of answers that someone might give?

To answer these questions, we are going to need your help as you distribute the 50 copies of the ACTS that are included in this package. Following the instructions below will ensure that we get the needed information.

- Although we are not assuming that the persons you select to complete the ACTS will be representative of all of those who separate at your site, we would appreciate it if you could try to distribute the surveys to a variety of people; include both males and females (with more of the former), a range of ranks, and different racial/ethnic groups. Please include retirees, but not individuals who are experiencing "adverse" separations (i.e., those who are being "kicked out.")
- Please have the respondent complete the survey on-site, rather than taking it with them. This reduces the risk that it will get lost in the shuffle.
- In order to determine how long it takes to complete the survey, please ask respondents to write the start and finish time in the upper right hand corner of the cover page.
- Finally, we need to know if individuals had any problems completing the ACTS. You can determine this in whatever way is most convenient for you. If administered individually, you may opt to simply ask each respondent as he/she returns the survey if they were confused by any items of instructions or had any other problems completing the ACTS. (Please keep a record of any comments made.) If group administered, you could ask group members to take a moment after completing the instrument and jot down any comments they may have on a separate piece of paper (not on the survey itself, however). Use whatever method is best for you, but please try to have respondents make comments *after* the survey has been filled out so that the time taken to do so is not included in the time-to-complete.

When all 50 of the Army Career Transition Surveys have been completed, please return them in the preaddressed Federal Express envelope included in this package. If you don't have regular FEDEX pickups at your site, you can call 1-800-238-5355 to have an agent get it or drop it at a FEDEX office. If you have any questions about these procedures, feel free to call Dr. Ron Tiggle at (703) 274-8295 (DSN 284-8295) or Dr. Janice Laurence at 1-800-716-6520. Thanks again for your cooperation in this effort.

APPENDIX D

Receipt Log

Survey Receipt Log

Site	POC	Telephone	Received (approx)	Surveys Completed
Bragg	MSG Raney	910-396-2118	3-16	51
Campbell	Mr. Weddington	502-798-2712/3310	3-15	49
Dix	Maj. Makowsky	609-562-3373/2174	3-14	49
Drum	SFC Morales	316-772-6856/3493	3-24	41
Stewart	Mr. Wallace	912-767-5602	3-24	49
Gordon	Sgt. Anderson	706-791-4774	3-24	50
Hood	Mr. Alverson	817-287-3382	3-27	29
Rucker	Ms. Escalfujri	334-255-2605/2700	3-31	43
Leonard-Wood	Ms. Runge	314-596-0977	4-12	3
Knox	Mr. Hertz	502-624-3114	4-25	35
Bliss	Mr. Hernandez	915-568-5903/7237	5-3	38
Benning	Ms. Childress	706-545-1162/6858	5-8	43

APPENDIX E

Topical Report

LROC Special Report
Longitudinal Research on Officer Careers
U.S. Army Research Institute

Army Officer Retention and Branch Assignment

Background: In addition to their identification with the Army as an overall institution, officers are affiliated with a particular branch (e.g., Infantry, Aviation, Signal Corps, Military Intelligence, Ordnance Corps). Several branches have been designated as special branches (e.g., the Judge Advocate General Corps and the Medical Corps).

Branch assignments are made early in an officer's career. Although branch preference is considered, not all officers are assigned to their desired branch. Promotion opportunities and retention vary across the branches. Of particular interest to members of the personnel and leadership development communities is the relationship between branch assignment and subsequent retention.

Issue: What is the relationship between branch assignment and retention? More specifically, does assigning officers to a non-selected branch lead to lower job satisfaction, lower retention propensity, and eventual separation from the Army?

This issue is of particular concern with regard to minority and female officers, because women and racial minorities are frequently "forced-branched" (i.e., placed into a branch in which they did not express an interest; this typically occurs so that women and minorities are distributed throughout the branches of the officer corps).

The recent downsizing of the force may result in an increased need to force-branch more officers overall as the Army has to do more with fewer personnel. Information is desired on the potential ramifications of this action on officer retention.

Source: Data from the Longitudinal Research on Officer Careers (LROC) survey were used to address the issue of the relationship between branch match and retention. The LROC survey was administered annually from 1988-1990 and in 1992. The survey assesses the attitudes and perceptions of junior officers over time. By monitoring changes in officers' attitudes and perceptions, the LROC provides a prime vehicle for better understanding the impact of policy changes and other external influences on the satisfaction and career intentions/decisions of the Army officer corps.

Information was provided by 928 junior officers, commissioned between 1980 and 1987, who responded to the LROC in each of the four years the survey was administered. The sample comprised 775 whites and 153 minorities; 684 were male, 244 female.

Findings: Total Group. Regarding branch assignment, just over 70 percent of Army officers received their first choice, and 82 percent received either their first or second choice (see Figure 1). In terms of separation, nearly 22 percent of the LROC respondents separated from the Army. Twenty-eight percent of the officers remaining in the Army

July 14, 1995

did not receive their desired branch assignment, whereas 35 percent of the officers leaving the Army failed to receive their desired branch. Nearly 17 percent of the officers who remained in the Army received neither of their first two choices, whereas nearly 22 percent of those leaving the Army failed to receive their first or second choice. Thus, officers who were not assigned to their desired branch had a separation rate approximately 30 percent higher than the rate for officers assigned to their desired branch.

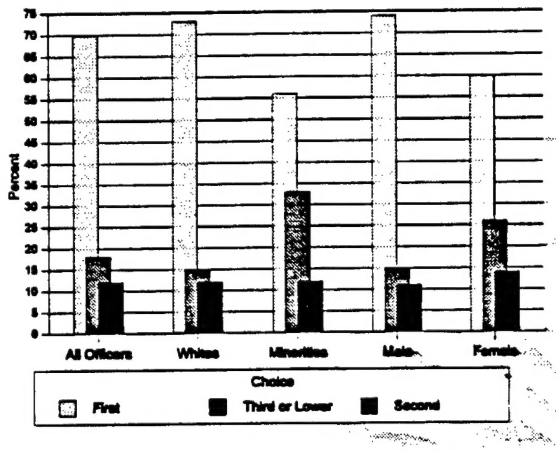

Figure 1. Distribution of Branch Choice Across Officers

Regarding satisfaction with promotions, officers who separated were significantly less satisfied than officers who stayed. Work satisfaction displayed the opposite pattern, with separating officers reporting significantly greater work satisfaction than staying officers (see Figure 2).

Comparing Branches. Officers in the following branches were least likely to obtain their desired choice: Ordnance Corps (39 percent), Quartermaster Corps (48 percent), and Chemical Corps (50 percent). Over 25 percent of the officers in Aviation, Signal Corps, Military Intelligence, Chemical Corps, Transportation Corps, Ordnance Corps, and

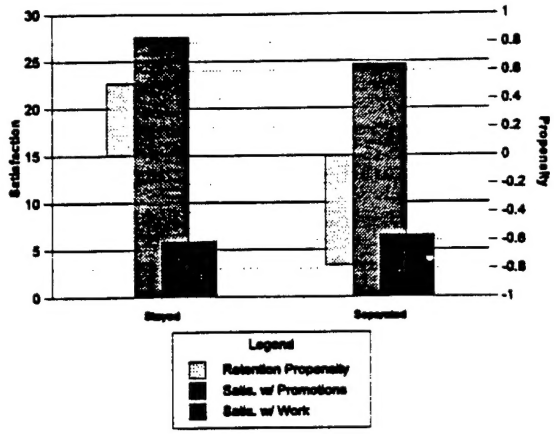

Figure 2. Scores on Retention Propensity, Satisfaction with Promotions, and Satisfaction with Work for Officers Who Stayed in and Separated from the Army

Quartermaster Corps left the Army. Branches showing the lowest separation rates were Adjutant General (15 percent), Corps of Engineers (16 percent), and Infantry (17 percent).

Minority Officers. Minority officers typically have higher retention propensity than white officers. Even so, forced branching could result in increased dissatisfaction and rates of retention. Whereas 73 percent of white officers received their most desired branch assignment, this was true for only 56 percent of minority officers (see Figure 1). Similarly, whereas only 15 percent of white officers did not get either their first or second choice, this was so for 33 percent of minority officers. It is unclear how much of this disparity between whites and minorities in receiving their desired branches was due to forced-branching, but minorities were more often assigned to branches they did not seek.

Whites and minorities responding to the LROC survey were equally satisfied with promotions and the work. For both groups of officers, being assigned to one's desired branch translates into increased satisfaction with

promotions but decreased satisfaction with the work (see Figure 3). To the extent that the higher quality officers are more likely to receive their choice of branch, this would suggest that the very best officers require more challenging duties to increase their work satisfaction.

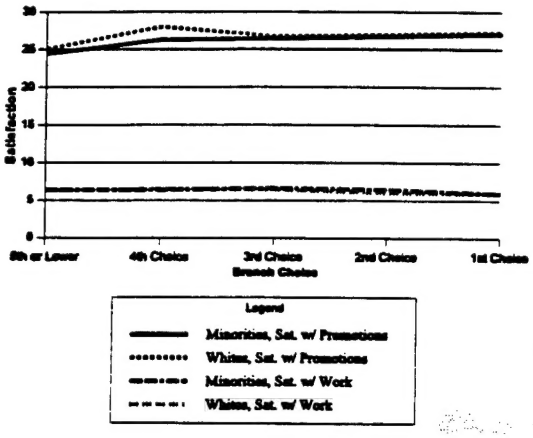

Figure 3. Trends Across Branch Choice in Satisfaction with Promotions and with Work for Minority and White Officers

Counter to the typical findings, minority officers reported slightly lower levels of retention propensity than whites in the LROC sample. The retention rates reflect this: 26 percent of minority officers separated, compared to 21 percent of white officers. The trends across branch choice suggest that a greater proportion of minorities than whites who did not receive their first or second choice of branch separated (38 percent and 18 percent, respectively). Hence, forced-branching could be eroding minority officers' propensity for Army service, resulting in higher separation rates.

Female Officers. Female officers generally have lower retention propensity than their male counterparts. Thus, forced branching could be particularly detrimental to retaining females in the officer corps. For the LROC survey sample, 74 percent of male officers received their most desired branch assignment. By comparison, only 60 percent of female officers were assigned as desired. Similarly, whereas only 15 percent of male officers did not get either their first or second choice, this was so for 26 percent of female officers. Again, it is unclear how much of this disparity between males and females in receiving their desired branches was due to forced-branching, but females (like minorities) were more often assigned to branches they did not seek.

Males and females responding to the LROC survey were equally satisfied with the work and with promotions. Similar to the minority/white comparisons given above, both groups of officers displayed increased satisfaction with promotions but decreased satisfaction with the work as their branch preference increased.

For the LROC sample, retention propensity for female officers was lower than for males (as expected). The lower propensity for females translated into slightly higher separation rates (25 percent of females and 21 percent of males separate). Similar to the minority/white comparisons, the trends across branch choice indicated that females who did not receive one of their first two branch choices exhibited much higher separation rates than males who were likewise assigned (37 percent vs. 15 percent).

Implications: IT MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE TO BEGIN THIS SECTION WITH A QUOTATION FROM AN UPPER-LEVEL OFFICER GIVING HIS OR HER OPINION OF THE FINDINGS. FOR EXAMPLE: COL LEAHY (CHIEF, FUNCTIONAL AREA MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION, TOTAL ARMY PERSONNEL COMMAND) STATED, "CLEARLY, WE MUST NOT BE TOO OVERZEALOUS IN OUR ASSIGNMENT OF MINORITIES AND WOMEN ACROSS BRANCHES. IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO RETAIN THOSE OFFICERS SO THAT THE BEST PERFORMERS CAN BE PROMOTED TO THE HIGHER RANKS, AT THE EXPENSE OF EQUIVALENT DISTRIBUTIONS, THAN TO ACHIEVE SIMILAR DISTRIBUTIONS AT THE COST OF LOSING THOSE OFFICERS FROM THE ARMY." SUCH A QUOTATION WILL EMPHASIZE THE POLICY IMPACT OF THE LROC.

Data from the LROC survey suggest that the costs of forcing disproportionate numbers of female and minority officers into non-desired branches for the sake of equally distributing them throughout the officer corps might outweigh the benefits. Minority and female junior officer retention and satisfaction with promotions are adversely affected by failure to receive a desired branch assignment. The findings regarding retention propensity and subsequent retention are particularly strong.

To the extent that forced branching increases separation rates for minorities and females, fewer officers from these special groups will be available to be promoted into the higher echelons of Army leadership. Army needs, which may override individual considerations, temper these results. The LROC data just presented are therefore of special interest to Army policy makers charged with meeting individual and institutional needs through branch assignment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE FINDINGS FROM THIS REPORT OR ON THE LROC SURVEY IN GENERAL, PLEASE CONTACT

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